

VINCENTIUS REDIVIIVUS.

A

Funeral Sermon,

Preached Octob. 27. 1678. 23

Upon Occasion of the much bewailed
Death of that Reverend and Eminent
Servant of CHRIST,

Mr. THOMAS VINCENT,

Formerly Preacher at *Mandlins Milk-street, London.*

By SAMUEL SLATER, an unworthy Servant
of Christ in the Gospel.

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Plal. 112. 6. *The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.*

Quæ cæcitas animi, quæve dequentia est, amare pressuras, & pœnas & lachrymas mundi, & non festinare potius ad gaudium, quod nunquam possit auferri. Arnob.

L O N D O N:

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Funeral Sermon

238;04

To my Honoured Friends Mrs. *Mary Vincent*
and that Flock of Christ over which the
Holy Ghost had made dear Mr. *Thomas*
Vincent Overseer.

AT your request this Sermon was Preached
and is now published. Such as it is, you are
welcome to it, and much good may it do you.
The Lord grant all those may meet with a
blessing in it, who shall read it out of a real desire to get
good for their souls; other Readers we care for none.
I take your invitation of me to this work, as an evident
token of that love and esteem you have for me, however
unworthy: Therefore I did not draw back, but humbly
bless God for the assistance he hath afforded me in it,
all you find here according to his Will, came from his
Spirit. I would be very, very low in mine own eyes
yet I do neither dread the censures of men, nor am I so
vain as to court their applause by making Apologies.
What I have here presented you with, are the Truths of
God, which deserve your acceptance; I desire you to try
them, and having seen their Fathers name in their fore-
head, give them a ready admission, a most friendly
and honourable entertainment. I shall speak nothing to
you here by way of advice, having said so much in the
Sermon; but only signify to you, that you are much upon

heart, and in my prayers; I will not be unmindful
you at the Throne of Grace, but speak many a good
word for you; the Lord comfort your hearts; and san-
ctify to you his hand, that out of the eater may come
bread; out of this Providence which hath removed your
reverend Pastor, special advantage may come to your
souls; the Lord send you another, under whose shadow
you may sit with delight, finding his fruit sweet to your
souls; the Lord supply all your need according to his
riches in glory by Jesus Christ. My dear Friends, wisely
and graciously improve this dispensation; submit to the
will and pleasure of a taking God; be much in the study of
your hearts and ways; be you sincere and thriving Chris-
tians. And the Father of mercies bind you up in the
bundle of life, and grant you a glorious Inheritance a-
mong them that are sanctified by faith in Christ; so
sayes,

Your Friend and Servant in our

dear Lord Jesus.

Samuel Slater.

Hebr. XIII. 7.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the Word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

THIS excellent Epistle is not without good reason reckoned to *Paul* as its Author, the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, who having obtained mercy, burned with zeal for God, and had such yearning bowels over the blind, unbelieving, obstinate *Jews*, his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh, that for their sakes he could have found in his heart to wish himself *accursed from Christ*, Rom. 9. 3. which was a rapture of love, a pang of affection highly becoming him, who was a brand plucked out of the burning; and of a chief sinner made an eminent Saint; of a cruel furious persecutor, a blessed and most successful Apostle; unto these *Jews* he wrote this Epistle, and for weighty reasons, without doubt, concealed his Name.

Herein he made it his business so to set forth the Lord Jesus, and commend him to them, as that they might receive him with all acceptance, as the promised Messiah, and High-Priest over the house of God, and persevere in faith and obedience to him; and likewise to lay down such rules for their lives and carriages in the world, as that by an holy and exemplary conversation, they might honour his Name, and adorn his Gospel: The Union between Faith and Holiness is so strict, that they never were nor can be separated; and it is pity they should, being most amiable in conjunction: Faith giving encouragement unto holiness, and holiness reflecting a glory upon faith. Several precious Commands or Exhortations you meet with in this Chapter, which,

which, though primarily ordered out to the *Hebrews*, do remain a burden upon all persons in all Ages who profess themselves Christians; unto them it is our duty to attend, and according to them to walk.

The Text is a fruitful Bough, consisting of three Branches :

1. *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God.*

2. *Follow their faith.*

3. *Consider the end of their conversation.* Or if you please, you have here a double duty enjoined, *Remember them that have spoken to you the word of God, and follow their faith*; and you have a choice means prescribed for the commending those duties to you, and encouraging you in their performance, *Consider the end of their conversation.* Of all these I shall (God willing) speak in the prosecution of this Doctrine.

Doct. *There is much duty incumbent upon people, upon the account of their deceased Pastors.* When Ministers dye, their work is done, they have finished their course, and dispatched the business given them to do: they did shine among you in Purity of Doctrine, and Holiness of Conversation, as long as the Lamp of life lasted; when the oyl of that was spent, they were taken up to Heaven, there to out-shine the Sun in his greatest strength and glory. But your work is not then at an end, being of equal extent and duration with your lives: As you have time enough for your work, so have you work enough for your time; none can say he sate idle one hour, because he had nothing to do; put forth all your strength, use your utmost diligence, husband your days and minutes to the best advantage; you will be happy men and women, you will have cause eternally to bless the hand above that help't you, if you can do your work by that time death shall come to take you off.

I am not now to speak concerning the whole duty of man, but those particular duties mentioned in the Text, relating to those servants of Christ, who have laboured among you, one of which is *remembrance*.

Remember them who have the rule over you. In which word two things must be considered, 1. The Act, *Remember.* 2. The Object about which that act is to be exercised, *Them which have the rule over you.*

I shall begin with the Object, *those which have the rule over you*, [*οἱ ἀρχόντες*] your Guides, such as are appointed by God to point out the way you should go, and do themselves go before you in it; such as do not only shew the way, but lead the way: this is the primary signification of the word. And it hath been metaphorically translated and applied to them whose business lies in ordering and governing others, both in Church and State, to persons in Magistratical and Ecclesiastical office. And without all peradventure, godly Magistrates, whether Supreme or Inferior, who rule in the fear of God, and with Prudence and Righteousness manage the affairs of State, are worthy to be remembred. Though a *Pharaoh* did rise up, who knew not *Joseph*, let not the man be found in *Israel* who remembers not *Joseph*; nor a Protestant in *England*, to whom the Memory of an *Edward* and *Elizabeth* is not precious.

But it is evident from the words themselves, that the Apostle here did not intend the Civil Magistrate, but Gospel-Ministers, whose work is not only to instruct, but also to rule in the Church of God: they have power to command the rich in this world: they are to rebuke with all authority. *Paul* had his rod too, which he knew how to use when need required: They are the Masters of the Assemblies, Elders that rule, as well as labour in the Word and Doctrine: Shepherds that are to feed the flock of God; yea, and to order it, and to reduce those sheep that wander. Yet let them remember, they are under authority; though chief men among the brethren, yet but men; though Masters of the Assemblies, yet servants of Christ; such as rule, but such as must be ruled by the Word; and in case of male-administration, are liable to censure: Their authority is of no farther extent than their warrant; they are to lead, and be followed, not blindfold, not as infallible persons, not as being above the possibility of erring; but with caution and

and limitation; follow your guides, Christians, but look to your way, 1 Cor. 11. 11, *Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ*; just so, and no otherwise; so far be sure to follow me, but not a foot farther. But we shall speak more particularly.

1. Those whom you are to remember, are the Ministers of the Gospel, the Embassadors of the glorious King of Saints, the Pastors and Angels of the Churches, in whom, though poor earthen vessels, God hath laid up heavenly treasure for the enriching of many. *Alexander, Caesar, William* the Conqueror may be remembred; but never let a *Paul, a Calvin, an Usher, a Caryl, a Manton, a Vincent* be forgotten; there is no need of canonizing them; God made them Saints while they lived, though the Pope dubs his Saints after they are dead; as the Heathen made gods, whose Ape he is: It would be a sin to worship them, to pray to them, or to put up your prayers to God by them, as his Master of Requests; *there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*; yet let them live, they do so in Gods sight, let them do so in your remembrance and esteem.

2. Those whom you are specially to remember, are your Pastors, Christs Ministers in your Congregations; so the Apostle directs, *them that have the rule over you*. It is the fashion of some to applaud and admire other Preachers, while they despise and slight their own, which is a shrewd argument of a wanton spirit: It would be their wisdom, and is their duty to like the disposals which God hath made. Accordingly, think you of them, honour them who rule over you, who have laboured among you, who spent themselves for you; their relation to you was very near, being your spiritual Fathers; if not those that begot you, yet those that nursed ye, and travailed for many among you, by preaching and prayer, with tears and groans, with earnest longings to see Christ formed in you; Oh how dear was their love, answerable to their relation; they watched over you, and watched for you; they brake their rest, and wasted themselves in providing and dealing out food to you, when, it may be, some among you thought much of returning to them a
sorry

sorry and pitiful acknowledgment or reward. However, let such narrow souls remember them now ; that will cost them nothing.

3. Those whom you are to remember, are your deceased Pastors [*loquitur de iis qui jam obierunt.* Jun.]; the Apostle here means those who had compleated their work, and were gone to rest. Let those Ministers of Christ, who are alive and remain, who at this day live and labour among you, be in your thoughts, and esteem, and prayers; count them worthy of double honour. Trample not them under your feet, whose feet are beautiful, being messengers of peace, that bring and rejoyce to bring you glad tidings of great good, the very best that ever the world had. Our Saviour pronounceth a wo against those dissembling Hypocrites, that *build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the Sepulchres of the righteous*, but despise the labours, and blow upon the reputations, and starve the bodies, and persecute the persons of those that are alive, *Matth. 23. 29.* Give unto both their due; let it never be said, that dear Mr. *Thomas Vincent* is out of mind, now he is out of sight. Though now his place know him no more, though his Family and Pulpit know him no more, let it never be said his People had forgot him too: No, no, as God hath received and glorified his Soul, and looks after his dust, of which he will not lose the smallest atom; do you preserve his memory, and count his name a precious and fragrant oyntment. Thus you see, Pastors, your Pastors, your deceased Pastors are to be remembred.

Quest. *But what, all of them? be they never so erroneous or flagitious?*

Answ. I do not say so, the Holy Apostle doth not mean so; if any be corrupt in their Opinions, unsound in their Doctrines, or disorderly in their Lives; if in their Sermons they bring you any other Gospel than that which Christ and his Apostles did; or if Preaching the same Gospel, and holding to the form of wholesome words, they contradict it by an unsuitable carriage, and by an unholy life destroy what they build; it had been well

for the World, and the Church, and themselves too, if they had never been born; and the sooner they are forgotten, the better: When their bodies are laid in a bed of dust, let their names be buried in the grave of forgetfulness. May their Memorial perish with them. Those who are worthy to be remembered, have these qualifications, which you find in the Text.

1. They are *such as have spoken to you the Word of God*; not the sentiments of Philosophers, nor the notions and counsels of learned and civilized Heathen; not *Aristotles Ethicks*, and *Plutarchs Morals*, or *Plato's Divinity*, though some good use may be made of them: Doubtless natural light is beautiful and lovely. But what need have we of the glistering of a glow-worm, or the blaze of a candle, who do enjoy the help of Scripture, that hath brought life and immortality to light; who do through the riches of mercy enjoy the gracious beams, the warming and quickning influences of the eternal Son of Righteousness? Let us not disparage the God of *Israel* by repairing to the forges of the *Philistines*, or borrowing their weapons for our spiritual warfare; none like to the sword of the spirit, the Word of God, which is mighty through God. We need not go to those puddles, since the Lord hath been pleased to open to us the Wells of salvation, out of which we may with joy draw living waters for the refreshing of thirsty, and reviving of fainting souls. Those Ministers are to be remembered, who bring not their own idle dreams, but Gods Truths; not the Precepts of men, but the Doctrine of Jesus; who have determined (as *Paul* did) to *know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified*: Those Pastors which (like the woman spoken of *Revel. 12. 1.*) *were clothed with the Sun, and had upon their heads a crown of twelve stars*; The Truth of Christ, and the Doctrine of the Apostles; in short, men sound in judgment.

2. They are such as did believe what they Preached; therefore you have mention made of their faith, *Whose faith follow*. Oh that I could say, all Preachers are Believers. But I cannot but tell you, though I desire to be very charitable, I have not faith enough for that; all ages having sadly proved the contra-

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ry : The woful defections and apostacies of many in the *Pagan, Arrian, and Antichristian* Persecutions, are undeniable demonstrations of the contrary. God forbid I should take upon me to judg any particulars, much less whole Parties; that very word [*Party*] is exceeding bitter and unfavoury to me; I heartily wish there were no such name, or thing; and oh for that day! when will that day come (the God of love and peace hasten it), in which his people shall serve him with one shoulder, and with one consent in the beauties of holiness! In the mean time I am firmly perswaded, that there are those who fear God, and work righteousness, and study to approve themselves by a sincere desire and care of walking up to Scripture-rules, and the dictates of their consciences, among all those Parties in *England*, which hold the Head, and have not drunk in *damnable heresies*, as the Apostle calls them; yet, yet I fear, there are also those that have not faith: Rest they do in floating notions, take things upon trust, are beholding meerly to education, or the profession of the Countrey where they live, for their being Protestants or Christians. And I also tremble to think how many would be found stark rotten, if they should be shaken by a temptation; found dross, if they should be cast into the furnace: Those deserve to be remembered, who are rooted and grounded in the faith; who can say, *Lo, this we have searched*: this we have experienced, so it is; Those that see the truth in its own evidence, that have found it mighty in operation upon their own souls; those that have held the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, and would not let it go upon any terms, or in any times, but chuse rather to venture all, to part with all, to throw all over-board, than to make shipwrack of faith and a good conscience.

3. They are such as practis'd what they Preach'd, and lived their own Sermons; such as express the virtues of him who had called them *out of darkness into his marvellous light*, and advanced them to be lights unto others. Such Masters of the Assemblies as did drive home and fasten the nails of serious wholesome counsels and exhortations with the forcible hammer of a spotless, gracious and heavenly deportment in the world; such as

preached Christ, and lived him too ; such as received him, and walked in him ; such as did [*1:10:10:10:10*] foot it right, and could boldly say to their flock, Walk so as ye have me for an example : Such as did not mind earthly things, nor hunt after the world, as if it had been their god ; did not sinfully serve the times, nor turn into all shapes, and wound their souls to save their skins ; did not prodigally spend their precious hours, nor unchristianly smite their fellow-servants, nor eat and drink with the drunken, but were the companions of them that fear the Lord, and placed their highest delight, next to God, in the Saints, those excellent ones of the earth ; and did shew out of a good conversation their works with meekness of wisdom, making it their inward desire, great care, and utmost endeavour in all things to adorn the Gospel. Holy men of God, who were good in the Pulpit, and in the House too, and in all places, in all companies ; against whom there could be no exception, save in the matter of their God, abating them for those natural humane infirmities, which are inseperable from the most holy persons, whilst on this side of perfection, tabernacling in houses of Clay : The good Lord increase the number of such Pastors in England, yea all the world over, in all places where he hath caused his holy Name to dwell ; and unto them, *mine honour be thou united* ; unto them shall my soul adhere in sincere and most intire affection, whatever smaller and circumstantial differences are, or may be between us. May so much suffice to be spoken concerning the object, about which the following Acts are to be exercised, unto which I now come.

Quest. *Next then, What is to be done by that people whom God did bless with such Pastors ?*

Answ. Two things, *Remember them, follow their faith.* Of which in order,

Remember them. Your memories are precious Cabinets, too good for dung and trifles ; lay up nothing in them but what is excellent ; there is enough of that : *Remember your Creator in the days of your youth,* yea and in the days of your age, *so shall you*

you be satisfied as with marrow and fatness. Remember your dear Saviour, his love, his life, his death ; attend upon Ordinances, and receive the Sacrament in remembrance of him ; remember his love more than wine : Remember the mercies you have received, so as to be thankful ; the promises you have made, so as to be faithful ; the sins you have committed, so as to be humble ; the experiences you have had, so as to be encouraged. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them ; them that are in straits and necessities, so as to be compassionate and liberal to them. Remember your latter end, so as to be diligent, and quicken your pace ; and withal, remember your deceased Pastors, who obtained mercy to be found faithful : They, they are some of Gods Jewels, allow them therefore a choicé room in these Cabinets.

Quest. You will ask me, how they are to be remembered ?

Ans. I Answer in these following particulars :

I. Remember them, so as to bless God for them. Have not you had great benefit, soul-advantages by them ? Oh ! let God have praises from you. When you are under smarting rods, sore afflictions, pore not so much upon them, as to become by that means injurious to God : Some that did too little mind, and prize, and improve mercies whilest they were in their hands, do view them, and curiously study them, when taken away, until their spirits be imbittered, and discontent raised up against the Providence. But, Christians, beware you of that ; I advise you to be sensible of your loss : Let the Widow be sensible what an husband she hath lost, the Children what a Father (if their tender age will admit it) ; the Family, what a Governor ; the Society, what a Shepherd ; I, and others, what a Friend and Brother. But let us all remember to bless God, that we had him once, that we had him so long ; let this Congregation bless God that ever it was committed to the care and charge of such a Minister, that ever such a shining and burning light was set up in this Candlestick ; that ever such a labourer was sent into this Vineyard. My dear friends, I do most earnestly beg this of you
for

for my dear Master, Whatever your loss is, how great soever, how painful and afflictive soever, let not your and my God be a loser; look carefully to that, as you love your selves; Gods loss is your loss. Therefore how sad soever your case is, how dark soever your day, how low soever your spirits, do not now, do not at any time withhold from God those praises which are his due. Truly he hath been good to you, and he is so now, and he will be so still, if you will but do your duty; therefore be sure to love him, and bless him; let the holy God ever inhabit the praises of *Israel*.

2. Remember them, so as to bewail the loss of them. You ought indeed to moderate your sorrow, keeping it within the bounds of Reason and Religion, as becomes those that have hope; nay, let there be a mixture of joy with your sorrow, being sure it is well with them, perfectly, unspeakably, and everlastingly well; their happiness doth exceed their thoughts, and not only afford satisfaction to them, but likewise raise admiration; Oh what am I that God should ever bring me hither-to!

Yet mourn. It becomes you to be both affected and afflicted in your spirits. What! shall the Father be smitten, and the Children not grieved? the Shepherd taken away, and the Flock not troubled? that would be a grand *Solecism* both in Nature and Religion. *When Samuel dyed, all Israel were gathered together, and lamented him, 1 Sam. 25. 1.* The tears of an whole Nation may well be poured out upon a *Samuels* death. *When Stephen the Proto-Martyr was carried to his burial, there was great lamentation made over him, Acts 8. 2.* Those devout and holy men broached their sorrow, they went on, weeping as they went. *When Elisba was arrested and confined to his bed by his last sickness, Joash the King of Israel wept over his face, and said, O my Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel, and horsemen thereof, 2 King. 13. 14.* And well may there be such great sorrow, else it will hold no proportion with the occasion: Losses of such persons are great, how little and vile soever in the worlds eyes while they lived; for they were their peoples blessings,

sings, the Nations pillars, the stakes in our hedge, and their death is not seldom ominous ; it speaks a storm-brewing evil to come. When they are hous'd in the silent and safe chambers of the grave, what may we look for next, but that the great God should come out of his place, cloathed with righteousness, and armed with vengeance, *to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity.* This know for certain, the Lord is greatly offended, it angers him at his very heart, when he sees men stupid and insensible under such dispensations, specially when they become ordinary ; *when the righteous perish, and are taken away, none considering or laying it to heart.*

It is true, there is now joy in Heaven ; but let there be sorrow on Earth, that will not be jarring : Angels and perfect spirits above, welcome those departed Saints with shouts and acclamations ; let us part from them with tears, at least with sighs. Possibly there are some who do rejoyce at such a mans death ; but whether they will believe me or no, I will tell them, they have no cause ; God will make them change their note, even they shall mourn at the last.

3. With your remembrance of them, joyn heart-grief and trouble that you gained no more by them ; consult and listen to your own consciences, see what they will say, deal impartially and ingenuously. Have not you been asleep in your seats, when they have been at work in their Pulpits ? Have not your minds been wandring after vanity, and your eyes gazing about upon this body and that ; this face, and that fashion, while they have been fixed and intent, wholly taken up about the good and salvation of your souls ? Have not you been cold at heart, while they were *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord* ? They have mourned, but you wept not ; they have piped, but you danced not ; when they poured out their souls in confession of sins, you were not humbled, your hearts not broken within you ; many a sad and foul story hath been told of you, yet you did not blush, neither were you ashamed : They have mightily wrestled with God, and tug'd hard for mercy, mercy for you, your pardon, and your lives, but you have sate and seen all
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this with a most wretched indifferency, as if you were persons altogether unconcerned, and did not care whether they prevailed or no. How have you slipt the precious truths they delivered to you, and been disobedient to the counsels they ordered out ; and have been little the better, though they came to you in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ? They have come and blown upon your garden, now with the *North-wind* of dreadful threatnings, then with the *South* of gracious promises ; yet *your spices have not flown forth* ; nay, are not too many of you unto this very day like the dry and barren Heath? And surely you have cause to be troubled, and oh that you may be so, the good Lord trouble you kindly ; let your souls have these losses and afflictions still in remembrance, and be humbled within you.

4. Remember them so as to be quickned by that remembrance. Think of their death, and go to their graves, and fetch life and liveness from thence : We Ministers should do so. When our fellow-labourers grow fewer, it stands us in hand to work the harder. What ! shall some drop on our right-hand, and others upon our left, yea many round about us ; and shall any of us notwithstanding be idle, and lazy, and half asleep at our work ! Oh that the rattling of deaths Chariot-wheels might awaken and rouse us up. When *Elijah* is taken up to Heaven, let every *Elisha* look out for a double portion of the spirit, and go forth in all their might to plead the cause of Truth and Holiness, and finish that great work their Lord hath set them.

You also that are the People of God, should double your diligence. You are not ignorant how your faithful Pastors liv'd and labour'd, how they walked and wrought, what indefatigable pains they took for God, and for you, and with their own hearts : though you do not know half, yet let that which you do know be a spur to you. Up, Christians, up, shake off a supine sluggish temper ; *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling : give all diligence to make your calling and election sure.* Hasten, oh hasten to the Kingdom of God ; lose no time, slip no opportunity, neglect no part of your duty ; fill up your days

days, relations, and places; and *so run, as that you may obtain*; you are compassed about with a great Cloud of witnesses; lay aside therefore every weight that presseth down, and the sin that doth so easily beset you; gird up the loins of your mind, call forth all your strength, buckle in good earnest to your business, and on, on in that holy pleasant race that is set before you.

5. Remember them, so as to be encouraged by them, and *take heart*. You live in a world that lyeth in wickedness, it is grievously polluted; almost all places are so dirty, that we can scarce tread clean; surely these are the dregs of time; you are environed with enemies and dangers. And speak seriously, Do you not sometimes feel inward fears and faintings? Well, encourage your selves in the Lord your God; *And take, my Brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the Name of the Lord, for an ensample of suffering afflictions, and of patience*. You have seen what great things God hath done by them, and for them; you have seen that God hath carried them through all their difficulties, so that *they have overcome at the last*. Satan that roaring Lyon hath pursued them, and come with open mouth, yet could not devour them; he hath got some of them, and *winnomed them as wheat, yet their faith did not fail*. Lusts and corruptions within their own bosoms have made frequent assaults, and furious batteries upon them, yet they could not prevail. These holy souls through Christ strengthening them, have trodden down sins strength; sometimes they have gone halting, but always came off conquering. The World again hath one while fawned like a strumpet, and another while raged like a fury; yet could not gain them by fair means, nor foul: *Though the Archers have shot sore at them, their bow hath abode in strength, and the arms of their hands have been made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob*. The waves have lifted up their voice, and dashed against them, yet have they stood like Rocks unshaken; some of them have had an hard passage, and met with many a violent storm; yet at last they have got in a Calm unto their desired Heaven; and being landed in the other world,

are now feasting in the new *Hierusalem* which is above, at the Court of the King of Glory.

It is true, they died, and so must we, so must the strongest and the highest; it is appointed for all men once to dye, yet these dye but once; they did not dye before the time; they did not dye before their work was done; they did not dye before they were fit to dye, no, nor before they were willing to dye; they were ripe fruit, and so dropt into the bosom of *Abraham*. In a word, they dyed to live, and now they live to dye no more: Be you therefore of good cheer, O ye holy Ones, that God who did so much for them, can do as much for you; his arm is not shortned, nor his ear heavy, nor his love less; be you strong in him, and in the power of his might.

6. Lastly, So remember them, as to think of theirs who are left behind. It is more than probable that some of their Wives and Children are in a low condition, and want conveniencies, if not necessities: Be you liberal to them, give them a supply out of your abundance; pare off some of your superfluities for their relief; you shall not suffer, nor be losers by it; I dare engage to you, there is one in Heaven will take care of that. There be others, who, though not reduc'd to such straits as to need the help of your purses; yet being now in a disconsolate condition, they do need your company and comforts. Poor hearts! their houses are left unto them desolate, they are *Turtles* alone, and mourn sore like *Doves*; give a knock at their door: now and then; when you can, turn into those Widows houses, and speak comfortably to them; the very sight of their Husbands friends cannot but be cordial to them; though for a time it will open the wound, and renew their sorrow; yet it will revive and chear them too. Thus much for the first part of your duty, *Remember your deceased Pastors*. Yet before I pass on to the second, let me subjoyn to what hath been said, two things by way of Caution.

1. While you remember them, be not unmindful of God, and do not forget to trust in God; though they are dead, yet God still lives, yea he lives for evermore; whosoever dyes, God

cannot dye; he necessarily is, and is necessarily what he is. As he is eternally, so eternally immutable, not having the least shadow of turning. And this ever-living God hath *the residue of the spirit*, and can pour it out upon whom he will, and furnish whom he pleaseth with Ministerial Gifts and Graces; and he never ceaseth to look after his interest and people. Look you to it, that you be true to him, and he will be true to you: He will have a Ministry in *England*, as long as he hath a Church in *England*; and may that be as long as the Sun and Moon endure, *Amen*. This great Lord of the Harvest will lose none of his Corn, not an ear, not a grain, for want of Labourers to gather it in. This gracious and loving Father of the Family sees good now and then to pinch some of his Children, but he will starve none. When *Israel* was in a Wilderness, he was pleased to work Miracles, rather than they should not be provided for; therefore let your Faith live as long as God liveth in Heaven, and you upon Earth. And let me add this for your comfort; Let never so many good men, eminent men dye, your life, O Believers, is secur'd and insured to you by the life of Christ. Hear his own words, *John 14. 19. Because I live, ye shall live also.*

2. While you remember them, do not forget your selves. It is readily and joyfully acknowledged, that God doth not stand in need of Ministers: He that could make Heaven and Earth by the Word of his Power, can accomplish all his pleasure without helps and instruments; yet you do need them, and it is his Will to employ them, and continue them to the end of the world. Magistracy and Ministry are two standing Ordinances, and will be necessary so long as there are men on Earth, and men to be fitted for Heaven. Therefore, my Brethren, sit not down in this your Orphan-condition. What I have told you is unquestionably your duty, but not the whole of it. *Keep together*. Though the Shepherd be smitten, let not the Sheep be scattered. *Look out for a good supply*; that your loss may be made up again, and your Pastors place filled. No loss is irreparable but the loss of God and your souls. *Be wise before you fix*; consult together, and ask advice of them who are both faithful and

able to give it; act with due deliberation, yet defer not too long. *Above all go to God*, who holdeth the Stars in his right hand; and then look out for a man Orthodox in judgment, and holy in life, who may not go about to raze, but wisely to build upon the foundation, which by my Reverend Brother hath been already laid. And my prayer is, That God would set a man over your Congregation, even a man after his own heart. And so I come to the second Duty incumbent upon you, which you have in these words, *Whose faith follow.*

Holy imitation doth most highly become all that profess themselves Christians. Be careful in your chusing a Pattern, and then curious in your imitation: You must not follow lying vanities, then you forsake your own mercies; you must not follow vain fashions, that is not suitable to the gravity and seriousness of your Religion. *You must not follow a multitude to do evil*, unless you have a mind to be damned with a multitude, and think Hell is a desirable place, because most go thither: The most beaten road is not always the best; you must not follow the world; instead of being conformed, you ought to be crucified to it.

You have far better Copies set you, far more noble and excellent Patterns before you. *God*; be ye followers of God as dear children. *Christ*, he hath left you an ensample, that ye should tread in his steps. *The Saints*, who while here walked in their integrity; and now they are above, sit in Robes of Glory: *Be ye followers of them that through faith and patience have inherited the promises.* And among them, those that have held forth the word of life, and shined as lights in the world. Be wise now in making these your choice, and follow them as close as you can; live up to Scripture-rules, and holy Presidents. And truly, my Brethren, since God and Christ, Godliness and Heaven are as good, full out as good as ever they were; I can see no just reason why Professors should decline and decay; why our gold should become dim; why the Saints of this Generation should fall miserably short of those that went before them; why the present Christians should be so unlike the former,

mer, both for Purity and Zeal, as if they were not begotten of the same Father, and did not suck the same breasts: But so it is; ah! so it is; our *Nazarites* were purer than snow, whiter than milk; whereas now the visage of many of them is blacker than a coal, they can scarce be known in the streets; and let this be for a lamentation.

Oh that you would do your endeavour to revive the old Godliness, which is the best Godliness; and to live over again the lives of the old Saints, and in particular, those of your Renowned Pastors: Follow them in all that is good, and within the compass of your sphere; you must never go out of your places to follow your Pastors; the Lord Jesus himself is to be imitated by you only in his imitable works. That being premised, I say with the Apostle Paul, *Phil. 4. 8. Whatsoever things you saw in them, true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, whatsoever there was of virtue, or of praise, think on those things,* and follow them in those things: In no other; for they were but men, imperfect men, subject to like passions, infirmities, and failings; and these you must not draw into an example, nor use them as an argument why you should do so too, as too many argue from *David's* Adultery to their uncleanness; for certain God never put such things upon record for an encouragement unto sin, but for cautions to all; you must not wander with them that wander, nor fall, because others have; no, follow them as they followed Christ, and only so, in all that is good, in all that is well-pleasing to God, and will be Ornamental to the Gospel. But I shall confine my discourse to the Command in the Text, *Follow them in their faith.* And here I shall speak to these four particulars:

I. Follow them in the Doctrine of Faith: Be sound in your judgments, and suffer not your heads to be fly-blown with Error. *Hold fast that which is good,* for otherwise you will lose your Crown: The age in which we live is a learned age, and it is a very inquisitive age, and an hot disputing, but with grief be it spoken, it is an error-broaching and imbracing age; there are too too many among us that act industriously toward the shaking

shaking of our foundation, though the Virgin-daughter of Zion looks upon their attempts, and laughs them to scorn; for God himself, the mighty God hath laid them, and they shall not be destroyed. But though our foundations are firm and lasting, yet many of our professors are feeble and wavering, yea some are removed to another Gospel: They have rejected those great Points, those main Truths, which are the very vitals of Christian Religion, and you may see them wallowing in the blood of their Apostacy: Stick you to that faith which was delivered to you by your deceased Pastors, who are now with God, that is, the faith which was once delivered to the Saints, once for all: The Doctrine which they held out to you, is the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, built upon the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Hold to that, all that, specially the Deity of Christ, his satisfaction, justification by him, and faith in him, not by works which we have done; and the spiritual mystical Union that is between him and true Believers. Keep these things as the Apple of your eye, yea as you would your lives. *And though we or an Angel from Heaven should come and preach among you any Gospel contrary to, or besides that which they have preached, and you have received, let him be accursed.*

2. Follow them in the Grace of Faith. They were Believers, be you so too: look narrowly to it, that it be *the true Grace of God in which you stand*. Take not up, my brethren, with an empty name, a verbal profession, a company of bodily exercises, and heartless duties. Mind, I beseech you, the Power of Godliness, and do not stop one hairs breadth on this side of it: Painted Hypocrites are as odious to that God who requires and searches the heart, as the openly profane: his soul hates them that secretly mock him, as well as those that publicly affront him. Make sure work therefore for your precious souls; see that you have that faith which is unfeigned, the faith of Gods Elect, that you do cordially imbrace the Truths of the Gospel, and close with an offered Jesus; that you have that faith by which you may live, that faith by which you may walk until you come
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to *walk by sight*. I would not have any of you deceived, and cheated to your own destruction, as many poor creatures are, who run away with a lie in their right-hand, build hopes of Heaven and Happiness upon a sandy bottom, please themselves in a lifeless Image of Religion, which the holy One of *Israel* will despise when he awaketh unto judgment; their faith is no better than a fancy; their Godliness is not a Godliness of Gods making nor approving; they walk about in the sparks of that fire which themselves have kindled, and at last lie down in sorrow. Be you wise for your souls, and deal prudently; get that faith which upon tryal will be found to praise and honour, much more precious than gold that perisheth; be ye provided with that Oyl which will keep your Lamps burning when the blessed Bridegroom cometh.

3. Follow them in the actings of their faith. Grace is given you not only for Ornament, but also for use; we are not only to be justified by faith, and saved by faith, but to live by faith. Have you got it? then suffer it not to lie dormant, but exercise it: Act your faith *upon Christ*, his Mediation, Merits, and Intercession: He is a full Christ; *it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell*, a fulness that is far beyond your emptiness; live upon him therefore, and draw from him, you can never draw him dry: Act your faith *upon the Covenant*, it is an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure. God is ever mindful of it; with it holy *David* comforted himself, in it he placed all his happiness, and sum'd up all his desires. Act your faith *upon the Promises*; these are exceeding great and precious, you cannot measure them, nor over-rate them. In them there is an answerableness to every case, a complete suitability to every condition, in which you either are or can be. And you cannot over-trust them, being Yea and Amen, of most sure and certain accomplishment: The Womb of Divine Promise never miscarried, but shall bring forth at the time of life, all the mercies and blessings with which it travails. Ever count Gods Promise abundant security; and believe that all Mountains which lie in the way of its performance, shall be made a plain;
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the darkeſt Providences are ſtill ſubſervient to the promiſe. *Joſeph* being ſold for a Slave, and clapt up in a Priſon, were ſteps to his being made the ſecond man in the Kingdom. Act your faith upon the wiſdom and power, the love and care of your heavenly Father ; know, he endears you, and will look after you : His Glory ſhall not be loſt, nor given to another ; his Truth is great, and ſhall overcome ; his Church is built upon a Rock, and the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it. *Jacob*, though ſmall, ſhall riſe ; and though a worm, he ſhall threſh the mountains ; the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet ſhall be caſt into a lake of fire, burning with brimſtone, and the glorious victory ſhall be the Lambs ; for he is King of kings, and Lord of lords ; and they that be with him, are choſen, and faithful, and true.

Believe, and rejoyce while you believe, that when Gods deſperate Enemies are at work, He himſelf is not idle, but obſerves them, is in the Conclave and the Cabal, undermines them, counter-acts them, and will turn their counſels backward or headlong, ſo that no weapon ſhall proſper which they form againſt his cauſe and people ; but he will accompliſh the thoughts of his heart, which ſhall ſtand in all generations ; and effect his own deſigns, and be abſolute Maſter of all his ends, finiſhing all the work which he hath to do in the world, and that without loſing either time or ground ; as our days go off, ſo Gods work goeth on, it is never out of hand. Thus act your faith upon God in all conditions, and under all diſpenſations ; when you are high, and when low, yea at the loweſt, for ſtill, ſtill, ſtill the everlaſting arms, arms, are underneath. In theſe actings of faith thoſe holy men lived, and ſo muſt you, otherwiſe you will never be eſtabliſhed, much leſs in ſuch gloomy, tottering, turning, and tumbling times as theſe are.

4. Laſtly, Follow them in the fruitfulneſs of their faith. Your gracious Paſtors were not, neither may you be *Soliſidians* : As they did believe, ſo they maintained good works, and by that means obtained a good report. While you know that faith juſtifieth you, you muſt alſo know, it is your duty to juſtife

justify your faith; that faith which is alone, is stark naught, it is dead and rotten, and stinks above-ground; shew me, and shew the world your faith by your works. If you ask me what fruits they are which grow upon the root of faith, and prove it genuine? I Answer, all the fruits of the spirit, in which you must abound, if you would have an abundant entrance into the glorious Kingdom of our God and Saviour. But I shall speak only to three, *Holiness, Love, Joy.*

1. Follow them in their Holiness. A wicked Believer is as meer an impossibility as a gracious Devil; such a faith as will consist with the love, and life, and reign of sin, is no better than what may be found in Hell among lapsed Angels, and damned Spirits, who, as the Apostle *James* tells us, *Believe and tremble.* Wheresoever true faith is, it purifies the heart, and reforms the life, and orders the footsteps according to the word: As it cloathes the soul with the beautiful Robe of Christs Righteousness, so it subjects the soul to his governing Scepter and Law; it lets Christ in, and casts corruption out; when Christ dwells in the heart by Faith, he shines in the life by Holiness: The pearl of faith is never found in the dunghil of profaneness. Study then, study holiness, and perfect it too in the fear of God; think with your selves what manner of persons ye ought to be, how accurate and exact in your whole course; remembering, *That grace of God which bringeth salvation, and hath appeared unto you, teacheth you, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, ye should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world,* 2 Tit. 11, 12. And that you ought to be like your Father, who is holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works. When therefore a temptation to any sin assaults you, resist it with utmost indignation, and say as *Nehemiah* did in another case, *Shall such a man as I do this?* or as *Joseph*, *How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?* or as that good Woman [*Christiana sum*] I am a Christian. This, my dear Friends, this is the way to glorifie your God, to honour your Religion, to credit your Pastors. In this way you shall be their comfort while they live, their Crown when they are dead,

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dead, yea their joy and rejoycing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming : The exemplariness of your carriage is the best commendation of the Ministers you have, and of the Sermons you hear ; whereas when you walk disorderly, and as Enemies to the Cross of Christ, you are our shame and reproach, spots in our Assemblies, goads in our sides, and burdens upon our spirits : Let no man nor woman tell others they sit under my Ministry, unless they resolve by the grace of God to depart from iniquity.

2. Follow them in their Love. True faith works love, and by it ; it kindles a pure flame of love, and then makes use thereof for the promoting and furtherance of all duty. Have you not taken notice of your Pastors love ? What did they think too much to do for you ? They have hazarded their liberty, and spent their strength, and broken their rest, and wasted their lungs for you : They mourned under the untractableness of some, and were humbled for the unreformedness of others, who had sinned, and had not repented ; they longed for your Conversion to God, and progress in Religion, and growth in grace : They had no greater joy than to see you walking in the truth ; Oh ! how did they prize God, and Christ, and you ? how did they rejoyce in their work, though hard, yet sweet ? how welcome was a Sabbath, upon which they might draw their breasts for your consolation, and open their treasures for your enriching ? imitate you them in their love ; give the best, the flower, the quintessence of it unto God. Erect in your hearts a Throne for Christ ; love him as well as you can, and then mourn because you love him so little, and always pray that you may love him more : Love one another dearly, for you are brethren, and so fulfil the law of Christ, and prove your selves his Disciples. Have an universal love for all the Saints, all in whom you can see [*aliquid Christi*] any thing of Christ ; yea so love all men, as to wish their good, and to do them all the good you can, even your Enemies, your Persecutors, those that hate you ; do you hate their sins and wicked ways, but love their persons, and pray for their conversion and salvation.

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3. Follow them in their Joy. You read of the joy of faith, and of the Saints rejoycing in believing, *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*. Certainly it is a duty incumbent upon all the Saints to rejoyce in the Lord, and that evermore; and call to remembrance the times that are past. Have you not seen the faith of your Pastors budding and blossoming with joy, when you have been sinking, and days have been dark, and fears many? Have you not seen a smile upon their brow, even then when there was a Cloud upon their tabernacle? You have indeed been acquainted with their sorrows, and their tears, because men hated to be reformed; would not keep Gods Law, but dishonoured his Name, and opposed his Gospel, and would break his bands asunder, and cast away his cords from them; but you have also been privy to, and witnesses of their joys; follow them in this: Let them that are of a fearful heart be strong; be you of a cheerful spirit, and let your brethren and others see you are so. You have, O Saints, matter of rejoycing in your worst conditions; nay, let me say this, You have much more matter of rejoycing than you now have, or ever shall have of sorrow and disquiet. For, if you be really what you profess your selves to be, God is the cause and matter of your rejoycing; it is he that is your comfort and your glory, *Psal. 43. 4. I will go, faith that sweet singer of Israel, unto the Altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy*: or as the margin tells you it is in the *Hebren*, unto God the gladness of my joy. Now I beseech you, if you can, tell me, What can possibly be; I ask you again, what can possibly be so great a cause of sadness and sorrow, as your God is of joy and rejoycing? Thou, O poor drooping soul, thinkest thou hast a great many sins in thy heart, and the Church of Christ hath a great many dangers at this day in poor *England*, City and Country is full of them; and doubtless all this is very true, too too true, the good Lord help us. Yet know, God is above them all, and greater than them all: He is greater than all thy sins, and so can both pardon and subdue them: He is greater than all his Churches enemies, and so can either reconcile and change them if he pleases, or curb and conquer them. As he is greater than all our dangers, and so can easi-

ly obviate and prevent them : He can with a word command deliverance, and create peace, and place a defence upon and about all our glory. You have, my Brethren, at all times, in the very worst times, more cause of joy in God, than you can have of sorrow and discouragement in any thing, nay in all things. This made the holy Prophet take up that brave resolution, *Hab. 3. 17, 18. To rejoyce in the Lord, and to joy in the God of his salvation*; though there should be a famine in the world, and the staff of creature-comforts should be broken to pieces; though earth should sink under him, yet he would by faith hang upon a God above him; and as long as he had a God above to live upon, his joy should live and flourish : He knew not only how to make a meal, but how to feast it upon God alone. Thus have I at large set before you that duty which is incumbent upon you in reference to your deceased Pastors, who have Preached to you the Word of God; it lieth in these two things, *Remember them—Follow their faith.* Now I come to the last clause in the Text, which you may look upon either as a third duty, or an excellent means for the commending of the two former, and facilitating them unto you; and that you have in these words, *Considering the end of their conversation.*

Here again you have the Act, *Considering*; and the Object, *The end of their conversation.* I will begin with the former.

Considering. We ought to be a considering people; it would be our safety, our honour, our comfort and advantage every way, as I could easily shew you. We should sin less, if we would consider more. Most, if not all our sins come in at this door, want of consideration. Men do not consider, their ways lead directly to Hell, going down to the Chambers of Death; and therefore they go on in them : They do not look into the state of their souls, nor consider how affairs stand with them; and so when they should mourn and weep, they live jovally, and frolick their days away, dancing and roaring upon the very brink of the burning lake : They do not consider the pearl of price, how orient
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it is, how excellent and inestimable; and therefore they do not sell all, and buy it: They do not consider the worth of their souls, that they are immortal, and their ransom precious, and therefore they barter them away for a filthy lust and transient pleasure. Men do not consider how sordid and odious a thing it is, how ill-becoming them, how hateful to God, and how exceedingly it inflames their reckoning, and will one day add to their torments, to swell like a Swine, to be filthy like a Goat, to curse like a Devil, and to swear like a Cutter; to profane Sabbaths, and mock at Religion, to hate the power of Godliness, and persecute those that are peaceable in a Land. Due and serious consideration, my Brethren, would correct all these things, it would reform a thousand disorders, and we should have another world. And until this be, the world will be the old world still; we shall find it as bad as ever, a wicked, malicious, and troublesome world; *Cain will kill Abel still; And they that are born after the flesh, will persecute them that are born after the spirit.* I shall not at all wonder to see men carry like *Bedlams*, to see them raging-mad in sin, so long as they live like fools, without consideration.

Well, my Friends, if any will be vain and foolish still, let them be so: As for you, reckon upon it as your wisdom and interest to do nothing rashly, not to pass over things lightly, not to run on headily; look before you leap, ponder your path, try all things. Consider those things which we deliver to you in the course of our Ministry, and require of you in the Name of our God, whether they be not most *holy, and just, and good.* Consider those things we propound to you, the great and gracious offers we make, whether you can any where else better your selves, and get a more gainful bargain; see if we do not out-bid all the world, and offer you such a match for your souls, as is the chiefest of ten thousands, altogether lovely, without compare. O ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

We would not have you embrace our counsels, and follow our directions blindfold. We can say this, We counsel you as we do our selves, and we lay no other burden upon you than upon our selves, and your souls are precious to us as our own, and it sorely troubles us to think of your eternal miscarrying, and our hearts would greatly rejoyce, even ours, if that danger were over, and that we did but see you in that tender and mighty hand, out of which none can pluck you: yet we would not have you take all upon trust from us; an implicit faith, and a blind obedience do not please us: No, weigh things in right balances, compare the service of Christ with the drudgery of a Devil, and the service of sin; peace of conscience, with roaring in a Tavern; the kisses of a Saviours lips, with the careffes of a Minion; the favour of Christ, with the smiles of a Man; a being filled with the spirit, with a being drunk with wine, in which is a brutifying excess. Compare contrivances for God, with plots for Rome, and conspiracies against Princes; an heavenly mind, with earthly affections; an interest in promises, and an inheritance in Heaven, with an ill-gotten estate in the world that hath a curse in it. Compare, I say, these things together, and consider, and then chuse. Let some men say what they will, their tongues are their own, only let them remember, they must at last be accountable for their words; as for us, we would have you rational in your Religion, rational in your believing and living; use your reason in all things within its reach, only to call that to determine in matters too high for it, in points of faith, that could never have been known by us, but by Divine Revelation, hath much more absurdity in it, than to call a Countrey-clown from following the Plough, to sit down at the Helm, and determine in the [*Arcana Imperii*] mysteries and riddles of State. Use all the reason you have, only be not unreasonable in your reasonings; and believe it, we are not afraid of having things brought to a tryal; the cause of Godliness is too good to be cast, when it hath its hearing before a prudent, impartial, and righteous Judge.

Consider then, and that not only once, but often ; so the Original word signifies [*ἀναλογίζεσθαι*] considering again and again ; frequently repeat this act ; think of it now, and think of it anon ; to day and to morrow, every day. The things of God, the matters of Religion, the product and issue of an holy life, do deserve greatest seriousness, and most frequent thoughts ; there is nothing in the world so considerable in it self as these things are, and therefore nothing in the world is so worthy of your consideration. Besides the merit of the things, the dulness of the heart calls for it. Ahlas ! we are not easily wrought upon ; our minds are blockish, our wills stubborn, our hearts obdurate, our judgments do not readily assent to truth, nor our wills close with goodness. We are as the Disciples were, slow of heart to believe, and submit and embrace the things of God. There must be precept upon precept, and line upon line ; and there had need be consideration upon consideration, and prayer upon prayer, and all this is little enough ; nay all this, and more than this would be too little, were not God pleased to bare his Omnipotent Arm, and to make it a day of power upon the obdurate and refractory sinner. Slight thoughts and transient glances will make no impression, will kill no sin, nor kindle any holy heat ; it is the fixed eye that doth affect the heart ; as the Burning-glass must be for some time held with a steady hand in the beams of the Sun, before it will fire combustible matter. Be much then in the work ; let not vain thoughts lodge, but let holy thoughts abide and dwell within you.

So much for the Act. I now come to the Object, What is it that we are to consider ? What ? truly you need never be at a loss for matter of consideration, most choice and excellent matter, *viz.* God himself, and the operations of his hands, in Creation-work, and acts of Providence ; specially that admirable Master-piece, sinners Redemption and Salvation. Consider your selves, your hearts and ways, and latter end ; together with that infinite Ocean of Eternity into which you must lanch ; and those two places, Heaven and Hell, into which all Intellectual and Rational beings shall be gathered.

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Consider the Sermons you hear, and search the Scriptures daily; bring all that is said in the Pulpit to the Law and to the testimony; and see whether those things be so or not. In Prayer consider in what a presence you are, and with what a glorious Majesty you have to do; what great Mercies and Blessings you have to seek, and do not offer the sacrifice of fools. Consider the Worship you perform, whether the word will warrant it, and God accept it; many things that are very pretty in the account of men, are very ugly in the sight of God. Consider the opinions you take up, the Doctrines you believe, whether they be truths of God, what foundation they have in the Scripture, with what evidence they come upon your minds, and what work they have made within. I might multiply particulars to this purpose, but shall forbear. The Text directs you to a very proper Object, Consider your Pastors, *in the end of their conversation.*

King Solomon was a very wise man, and very considerate; he went too far in his trial and search for an happiness under the sun; and being out of his way, he was often in the ditch; yet wheresoever he was, he took consideration with him: You find him one while *returning and considering oppression*, Eccles.

4. 1. another time you find him *returning and beholding vanity under the sun*, Eccles. 4. 7. and at another time he is busily taken up in the sluggards field, Prov. 24. 30, *He went by the field of the slothful: he saw and consider'd it well, and lookt upon it.*

What did he observe there? Two things; The posture of the field, and the issue of the Owner. The field lay over-grown with thorns, covered with nettles, having its stone-wall broken down; and as for the end of its Owner, that was beggary; he had not so many rags to his back, as he had nettles in his ground. Poverty and want came upon him as an armed man. King Solomon consider'd all this, and receiv'd instruction. He was the better for it while he liv'd. If we would be wise, we might get good out of nettles; turn every thing we see, into spiritual advantage. Honey is by the industrious Bee suckt out of nettles and weeds. But,

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I am calling you to turn, not into the Field of the heavy and lazie drone, but into the Field of the diligent and laborious Husbandman. And do you consider it well, observe how it is watched, and manur'd, and kept; how curiously it lies, and how fertile it is; what pains the industrious owner took in sowing, and what comfort he hath in reaping; observe his harvest joy, when he goes home at night carrying his sheaves with him. We will consider here two things.

1. Ἀναστροφὴ, their Conversation.

2. Καταστροφὴ, the end of their Conversation.

1. Consider their Conversation, all the windings and turnings of their lives, take special notice of the whole, and of each particular. Consider them *in all their Capacities*, Private and Publick, as Men, Christians, Ecclesiastick Governours. *In all their Relations*, as Neighbours, Friends, Masters, Parents, Husbands, Ministers. *In all times*, serene and cloudy, halcion and tempestuous. *In all conditions*, high and low, prosperous and adverse, in Honour and disgrace. In all these consider the evenness of their spirits, the stedfastness of their faith, the holiness of their walking, their industry and patience, their self-denial and submission, their meekness and contentation, their purity and zeal. Consider how in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God they have had their Conversation in the World, 2 Cor. 1. 12.

2. Consider the end of their Conversation. A two-fold end, which I shall give you up in these termes, since better do not occur at present.

1. The end of their desires.

2. The end of their days.

1. Consider the end of their desires, what they propound to themselves, and aim at in all they do, and which indeed their hearts are very much upon. Would you know what it is, I answer negatively; Not a name among men, to be carried aloft by the fading breath of popular applause. Alas that is a vain thing that will please and satisfy none but a light and empty Spirit. *With them it was a very light thing to be judged by*

mans judgment, 1 Cor. 3. 2. That wind continueth not long in one corner. Our dearest Lord Jesus spake and lived as never man did, he excelled and outshined all that ever the world could glory in, the brightest stars were darkned by that beautiful Sun, yet he, even he met with a crucifie him, after an *Hosannab* in the highest. Again, their end was not worldly riches and secular advantages, not vast and swoln estates, on which the greater part of the Sons of men dote, yea too many professors, these did flie an higher pitch. A liberal maintenance was their due, the communication of their spirituals did richly deserve a return of your temporals, which to make is not your charity but duty, yet this was not their end. I could tell you of some, who for your sakes have greatly deny'd themselves; Others have laboured hard and cheerfully in the midst of hardship and want. They have hugg'd opportunities of bringing to hungry souls bread from Heaven, clusters from the Land of promise, when they themselves have, as to their outward condition, been in a dry and barren wilderness: but affirmatively thus, the end at which they aimed did consist of these three things, which were worthy, most worthy of such truly noble souls.

1. The glory of the ever blessed God, which is his own supreme and ultimate end in all he doth; and indeed nothing below the glory of God is fit to be advanced to the honour of such an end. Now this was the end of those holy men, *That to live is Christ*, said Paul, *Phil.* 1. 21. He was the Author, preserver and comfort; he was the pattern and end of *Paul's* life: the advancing of his name, the setting forth of his excellencies, the enlarging of his territories, and increasing the number of his subjects, was the scope, the white at which he levell'd all his actions: and this also was principally designed by your gracious and faithful Pastors: Christ they loved, and Preached, and exalted; for him they contended, for him they suffered, for him they were ready to have died; for the proclaiming of his Righteousness, yea his only, and for the maintaining of his Authority, as Head of the Church, and *Zion's* King, against the bold

bold and God-daring invasions of the grand *Roman*-Impostor and Usurper with his Adherents. Doubtless nothing was so sweet to them as serviceableness to this purpose. Contributions herunto did not only reconcile them to their own eclipses, reproaches, losses and sufferings, but also put a pleasantness into them. *John* the Baptist speaking of this blessed Bridegroom, could say in the uprightness of his heart, *Joh. 3. 29. 30. This my joy is fulfilled; he must increase, but I must decrease.* And you find *Act. 5. 40, 41.* when the Apostles had been beaten for Preaching up Jesus, *they departed from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his Name.* Now, my Brethren, this is such a pitch as the most raised Heathen, and sublimated carnal man never yet soared; their principles are too low and sordid, their wings too weak and feeble to admit of so lofty a flight. Let nature and the power of it be never so much commended by its admirers, the natural man without a supernatural principle, and the sweet, yet mighty assistance of special grace, never did, never can make God his highest end: No, no, self sticks too close to him, and is predominant; it is both at the top and bottom of all his actions, and doth indeed run quite thorough them. Whereupon *Theophylact* said, "you cannot instance in one good Heathen, because they did all for vain-glory."

2. Your deceased Pastors designed the salvation of their own souls; interest in God, communion with him, and fruition of him, tastes of his sweetness, sights of his beauty now, and satisfaction hereafter. They were of *David's* mind, and rejoiced in the same hopes. *David* had been speaking of the men of the world, how they had their bellies filled with hid treasures. Oh! that is good, say some, we wish we had our belly full too; but stay, that which spoiled all is this, that they had their portion in this life. The comforts of the world are good enjoyments, but they are a bad portion; that holy man did think them so, and therefore closed most sweetly thus, *Psal. 17. 15. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.* It is as if he had said; Every

one as he likes, if these men see so much in the world, let them take it, and much good may it do them; when they have their bellies full, let them go to rest, and sing themselves asleep in the lap of pleasures, at the breast of creatures; when God awakens them, they will find emptiness and pain, having fed all along upon wind and ashes. *As for me*, I will not be put off with these things, they are but for the body, but for the belly which must be destroyed, for that part of man which shall never be glorified. *As for me*, I study the good of my precious soul, and am set for a portion for my soul; I would have my portion to take when their portion is spent: I am for beholding the face of God, and satisfaction with the likeness of God; and when I once have that, I am sure that I shall have enough both of his love and of his glory.

Paul laboured more abundantly than all; if you should ask him, what it was he laboured for, he tells you, I and my faithful Brethren labour *that whether* present or absent, they might be accepted of God, 2 Cor. 5. 9. We would gladly be accepted of the Saints, but our chief desire and ambition is to be accepted of the God of Saints, and to be received to live with him as his Children for ever. And surely their greatest Adversaries may well allow them this. We all know, there is a scantiness in the creature, and a narrowness in the world; from whence proceeds shouldering, and jostling, and scrambling; but the Divine Love is infinite, the fulness of a God inexhaustible, and in Heaven there are many mansions, room enough, and happiness enough, and glory enough for all that shall come thither: let us not quarrel by the way, nor at the Inn; at home, at our Fathers house, there is *fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore*.

3. Lastly, They desir'd and aim'd at the spiritual good, and eternal welfare of your souls: To bring you unto Christ, to build you upon Christ, to keep you from departures from him, and from unsteadfastness with him; in a word, to be instrumental for the making you meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. Your selves are witnesses of the

the pains they took among you. God is witness of their studies for you, the tears they shed in private, the prayers they made, in which they wrestled with great wrestlings, that you might live in his sight, and neither fall short of the grace which is bestowed upon his people, nor of the *Rest*, which remains for them. I dare with highest confidence affirm, these were the ends at which they principally aimed, and do not fear being put to the blush at last, as one that is found a liar.

2. But now let us consider the end of their daies, their [*Ex-
sais*] last end, their going off the stage of the world, and out of this vail of tears. What *Exist* have they? how come they off at last? for that is the import of the word in the Original; which (saith a Learned Critick) is a metaphor taken from those, who being incompast about with thieves, are in danger on every side; how do they escape? Faithful Pastors are the light of the world, but how many are there every where puffing at them! They are the Salt of the earth, but how do the wicked endeavour to cast all this Salt upon the dung-hill! and what an unfavoury world should we have then? They are troubled on every side, and in all revolutions of Kingdoms and Nations, none are so much exposed to hazard as they. Well now, observe and consider the end, the last Act, and blessed be our good God, you shall find that *in the Evening it is light*, [*Finis coronat opus*] Their End is such as that it crowns their works; such as makes them free to tell the world, that their labour hath not been in vain in the Lord, because it fully answers all their hopes and expectations; nay, doth unspeakably exceed them. It is such an End as is desirable for all men. Even a *Balaam* wished thus, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his*. The vile wretch did not like the righteous mans life, that was too refined and strict for him who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but he would fain have his end. And you will see no cause at all to wonder at it, if you will but retire a little, and in good earnest consider these things.

1. The End of your faithful Pastors, yea and of faithful
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Christians too is *a welcome end*. Others, like the fool in the Gospel, have their souls taken from them; there is a force put, if they could resist, they would: in a fullen mood and discontented fit they will call for death, but when it comes indeed, they wish it farther off. Whereas these resign their souls, and give up the Ghost, and commend their spirits into their Saviours hand, They did according to their duty love their work, and Relations, and Friends, and Comforts, yea and glory in the Cross of Christ, but they can freely bid farewell to all, when they know they shall, and think they do go to God. Though their daies be few, yet they depart hence full of daies, because they have had their fill of living, they do not only submit to God, when he sends for them, but also are well pleased, the World was crucified to them, and they to the World; & when things are once brought to that pass, it is no hard matter to part, the World is weary of them, because they convince and condemn it; and they are weary of the World, because of its wickedness and frowardness. It is terrible to think, what a struggling there is when a wicked man comes to die. Methinks it is something like, though much beyond that of the Vine and Olive, when the rest of the Trees would have made one of them King; Oh, saith the Vine, how shall I leave my sweetness? and I, saith the Olive, my fairness? So say ungodly men upon a dying bed, how shall I leave my jovial and merry companions, my honours and preferments, my riches and estate, my pleasures and delights? if these be once gone, all is gone with me, there is nothing left, I have nothing to take to. Death raves them at once. Alas, these poor creatures are not branches of the Vine, they are not ingrafted into the Olive, they are brambles, and it is not strange that they should rather chuse to rule on earth, than to burn in Hell.

But when these holy men come to die, whatever strugglings there are in nature, they cheerfully comply. Death is what they have looked and longed for. *Paul desired to be dissolved and to be with Christ, Phil. 1. 23.* They groan earnestly to be clothed upon with a robe of glory, and that house which is
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from Heaven, 2 Cor. 5. 2. They have been familiar with death, they have prepared for it, and waited for it, and given many a long look; and what should hinder their bidding of it welcome, since they know it comes upon a good errand, though it be a grim Messenger.

2. It is a *peaceable end*. If a wicked man should say to Death, as *Foram* did to *Jehu*, *is it peace*, Death? He might expect such an answer as he had. *What peace*, so long as thy rebellions, and whoredoms, and abominations are so many? peace? no, no peace. I am come to arrest thee upon Actions of high Treason against the King of Heaven. The Sovereignty, Holiness, Goodness, Son, Gospel, Mercies, Judgments of God have brought in their charges against thee, and I am come to drag thee as a cursed Malefactor to the tribunal of thy Judge, where thou shalt be convicted and sentenc'd.

But now if these gracious men should ask death, as the *Elders* did *Samuel*, *comest thou peaceably*? the answer would be, *yes peaceably*. I was thine Enemy, but I am reconciled. A good Friend of thine hath pluckt out my sting, so that I cannot hurt thee. I am come to fetch thee home. I am come to send thee to a place where thou hast laid up great hopes, and many prayers, and much treasure, to a place where thy Father is, and thy Saviour, and an innumerable company of Angels, and Spirits of just men made perfect; many of them thou knowest, most of them thou knowest not; yet all of them, one and other, are ready with joy to bid you welcome. Sanctifie thy self, set thine house in order, and come away. As soon as ever I have taken off this clog of earth, Angels shall, according to the charge their great Lord hath given them, receive thee, and conduct thee to *Jehovahs* palace, where thou shalt quickly be; not tiring by the way, and no want in the Countrey. It is true, a malicious Devil is ready to fall upon the Saints, when they are weakest, and if God permit him, he will bruise their heel just when they are to go their journey. And sometimes there is a very sharp bout, and soar conflict upon a death-bed between him and them, but when once death is come, he parts
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the fray, and all is quiet. The Devil may rage, and storm, and fret, but he can do nothing else.

3. It is a *comfortable end*; I deny not but a little before there may be Clouds; and this shady Valley so dark, as that the Believer is at a great loss. Though his Title be good, yet he cannot read his Evidence. God may be pleased to put a Vail upon his own face, and the Sun of Righteousness suspend his Beams. There may be a great silence in Heaven, and not one word of comfort spoken, that the attentive and listening Soul can hear. God is indeed by, but he is not seen. He doth uphold, but not revive. And hereupon there follows sad questionings and hot disputes, *if it be so, why am I thus?* will not God vouchsafe me one smile now, and can I think he owns me for one of his Children? *Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Hath he forgotten to be gracious,* or resolved he will not be so to me? But when it is thus very dark, the dawning of the day is near at hand. And oftentimes the Clouds scatter, and the case is rightly stated, and things are brought to a good issue, before the last blow be given. God comes in and takes off the sackcloth, and puts upon his beloved Child a Garment of praise, so that now helies in state upon his Bed of languishment. But however, as soon as Death hath done his work, the dispute is at an end, and the controversy is determined on the Souls side. And this is done when things have been at the worst. After the lowest ebb, there then is a spring-tide of consolation. Then the enlarged Soul *doth magnifie the Lord, and the Spirit rejoiceth in God its Saviour.*

But how often is it otherwise, have you not known? have you not heard, that some of these precious Sons of Sion, these heirs of joy and glory have triumphed over Death, even while they were under its assaults. When Death hath been making its most furious batteries, then have they been singing their Song of praise in the Apostles language and strain, 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56, 57. *O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus*

Jus Christ. What raptures have they been in; and what extasies of joy? so that their pains and throws have been forgotten or neglected. How have some of them told by flanders [*hic sat lucis*] *here is light enough*, meaning in their breasts. And others, that they were as full of joy as they could hold. God had anointed them with the oyl of gladness against their burial, and made their cups run over, so that their Hearts have leaped within them at the thoughts of their being upon the borders of Eternity, and so near the company which they lov'd so well. Witness that more than Swan-like Song of good old Simeon, *Luke 2. 29, 30. Lord now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* Having got his Heart, and Christ in his Eye, he would set up his Sail, and his Frait, Grace in be gone for the other World.

4. It is an *Honourable end*. Wicked men go out in a stink, not only the grossly profane, but the hypocritical professors, if discovered, as often they are. Their putrid carcases are not so unsavoury as their Names. Specially the Names of such professors, who by their villanies have made Religion stink in the nostrils of foolish men; though it is pity it should. Let all men judge of our Religion, not by the practices of some that pretend to it, but by its own Rules and Laws, which are the most exact, excellent, and noble, of any in the World. But let the name of the wicked rot, and indeed so it doth and shall. There is a curse upon it, and that rots it. There was wickedness in their Lives, and that causeth rottenness in their Names. No good man will speak well of them, and the commendations of the wicked are not worth the having, for they are a real disgrace.

But these followers of the Lamb have obtained a good report, and left it behind them. That Death, which makes them naked and bare of all their temporal enjoyments, cannot strip them of this. The righteousness of Christ, and the graces of the Spirit go along with them; their works follow them, and the remembrance of their holiness and usefulness stays behind. How do their Relations and Friends want them? How do their People and acquaintance bewail their absence! nay, some of their Enemies

mies will strew flowers upon their Herse; And though they will not be so liberal as their Conscience, nor speak all that's put into their mouths, but suppress and detain such truths in unrighteousness, yet they will bestow the Epithet of *an honest man*. That God whom they served, hath said, *The Righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance*. He takes care of their names, as well as of their dust. And he hath also said, *the memory of the just is blessed*. It is and shall be so, like a precious oyntment, which fills the whole place where they lived with a fragrant odour, yea and places far remote.

We cannot expect all should speak well of them. Some paint the Angels black; the Devil would have had *Job* taken for a meer mercenary, although he was the Worlds none-such for his uprightness. *Shimei* cursed *David*, and *Tertullus* the Orator threw dirt upon a *Paul*. Christ himself was called a Deceiver after his death, yet He was in all things faithful to him that appointed him. When *all* men speak well of *one*, it is a shrewd sign, *all was not well*. Either something was amiss, they will be such as their company is; or else something was wanting, *viz.* Faithfulness and plain dealing. It is honour enough to have a good report among them who fear God, they are best able to judge, and most to be credited; and this honour have all his Saints, all those, whose character I have given you, and those also who tread in their steps, and hold out to the end, so doing.

5. Lastly, It is *a most blessed and glorious end*. You, Slaves of Hell, who are at the Devils beck, and drudge for him all your days, committing uncleanness with greediness, and drawing sin as with Cart-ropes, what is the end you must expect? The Apostle tells you, *Rom. 6. 21. The end of those things is death*.

That is the best wages the Devil hath to bestow upon his Servants, a never-dying death, a death which is unspeakably worse than death, and their end is *shame*. Now they are impudent, but then they shall be ashamed. Dread shall fill them, and shame cover them. *That is the promotion of fools, Prov. 3. 35*. Oh! change your Master, leave your work, break off your sins by repentance, unless you think eternal death a good reward, and everlasting shame desirable preferment.

But

But behold these servants of the Lord, who have served their generation according to the will of God, and glorified him upon earth, who have fought a good fight, and kept the faith to the finishing of their course; who have desired and endeavoured to turn many to righteousness; how is it with them, when their end comes? I want words, *The lines fall to them in pleasant places, they have a goodly heritage.* Who can summe up their happiness? were one of them here, were an Angel here, he could not tell you half. They are approved, and highly commended. The testimony given is, that *they pleased God*; that they have done well, very well. [*Euge bene serve*] *Well done good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in thy little.* Now they shine as Stars in the Firmament: now they have their Crown of Righteousness, in comparison of which the richest Diadems are not worth taking up in the street. And their glory is answerable to their Crown. An exceeding and eternal weight of glory, such as hath substance and solidity in it. And no wonder if, together with all this, they have their joy. If any thing can, this will make them forget their former sufferings, the worlds affronts and incignities, the angers and bitter unkindnesses of their Mothers children, who are dandled in her lap, and yet are peevish with their weaned Brethren. All this will make them merry at heart, and cheerful in look, and sing *Alleluia*. They have a joy of God's making, and maintaining; not the crackling joy of the world, but the unconceivable joy of their Lord; a joy too big for them to contain, though their capacities are greatly enlarged: it cannot enter into them, they shall enter into it: a joy that shall fill them to the brim, and compass them round about: they shall be in joy as a full vessel in the midst of the immense Ocean. The doctrinal part being thus finished, I shall speak a little, and but a little in a way of Application. And

Use 1. My Reverend Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry of whatsoever Judgment you are in these divided times, give me leave in all humility, yet with all earnestness to beg of you, that you would so preach and walk, so labour and live, as that you may be examples to the flock, and your memory may be blessed. Oh! let us all look to it, that we

know and speak the truth as it is in Jesus, not departing from the purity and simplicity of the Gospel. Let us remember, whose Embassadours we are, and keep close to our Commission, delivering only our Masters word. Let our lips preserve knowledge, and not cause people to erre. May our discourses turn chiefly and mostly upon those two Cardinal points that Pauls did, *Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*. Do what you can to turn your Auditors from all their immoralities to a sober, civil, and unblamable life. Doubtless the Gospel requires this. Christ came to redeem us not only from Hell and condemnation, but also from a vain and vicious conversation. And our perfection in Heaven will consist in a compleat conformity to the Moral Law. If any decry Morality, it is because they do not understand it. Yet my Brethren, let us also teach Faith in Jesus Christ; do not rob him of any part of his glory, to bestow it upon another. Sure I am, that is far from Morality; it is no good manners to deal so with a precious Saviour, to whom we are infinitely and everlastingly obliged. And such injustice will cost them dear, that are guilty of it. Labour we to make men and women sound Believers. Shew them the insufficiency of all they do to justify them; that they may never (with the besotted Jews) go about to establish their own righteousness, but submit to the righteousness of God, and by Faith put on that perfect spotless Robe, which our dear Jesus hath wrought for humbled sinners. It is that, and that alone, that can cover all our shame, and adorn our persons, and make our beauty perfect, and us lovely in the sight of God. Teach them to look after the inward glory which the King's Daughter had, *Psal. 45. 13.* but withall to put on this clothing of wrought gold.

And let us also live up to the Laws of our Religion. Away with covetousness and debauchery. Away with envy, malice and contention, Let not the noise of Axes and, Hammers, and evil Tongues be heard among us. Verily these things will not be for our honour. Bespattering one another is not a likely way to beautifie our selves; it is a dirty trick, and some of that dirt which you throw upon others will fly back upon your selves; or if not the same, yet some as bad. This very work defiles you. That person hath no love in the family, who is of a cross spirit, and delights in abusing. Walk holily, and humbly, and in love. Let not head-divisions cause heart-divisions. *Hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, envyings, are works of the flesh*, as well as *seditions and heresies*. These gratifie the Devil, and please Papists, but offend God, and dishonour you. Let all of us that fear God, and love godliness, keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, for we are Brethren. We see the common Adversary is at work to ruine and destroy us all;
let

let not us strengthen his hands for it by weakening our own, and devouring one another.

Use 2. I would exhort you that are the People, to remember your deceased Pastors, and follow their Faith. And in particular, do you set upon these duties, my dear friends, who are the Members of this Congregation, who sate under, and rejoiced in the Light and Labours of my dearest Brother, your late Reverend Pastor, *Mr. Thomas Vincent*.

Concerning whom, much, very much may be said in his high and just commendation. My acquaintance with him hath been short, not full three years; so that I cannot look back so far, nor enlarge so much upon this noble and copious Subject, as some of my worthy Brethren could have done, had you pleased to have invited one of them to this service. Blessed be God there is no need of many words, for his works praise him in our Gates; they will speak, though I should be silent. But I know you do expect something from me, which you may please to take thus.

Reverend *Mr. Thomas Vincent* was a man really set for God; having chosen him for his portion, and for his Lord too. He was devoted to his fear and honour, and delighted greatly in communion with him: him he served with his spirit in the Gospel of his Son. Prayer was his daily work, and great delight: he was much at it, mighty in it, and successful too. Many a gracious answer was given him from Heaven. This wrestling *Jacob* was a prevailing *Israel*, a Prince with God.

He was a painful and industrious Labourer in God's Vineyard, laying out himself to the utmost for his peoples good. Oh! how great was his zeal in the Pulpit? what his hand found to do, there he did it with all his might. You his Auditors could not but conclude his Heart was in his work. He put up his requests to God, and delivered his messages to you with enlargedness of soul, and in the sweat of his brows. I can assure the world, he was none of those idle drones, those slothful servants, who did the work of their Lord negligently.

He stayed with you here in the time of that noisom and greedy Pestilence, which raged so furiously, and devoured so hastily, and numbered out many thousands, and ten thousands, to the Grave, when others fled for their lives, he kept his station all the while, knowing he could not go out of Gods reach; the arm of omnipotency could so bend his bow, and draw his arrow to the head, that it should flie as far as he could run. He knew his duty and his safety lay together. He was however freely willing to venture his life for the salvation of souls.

He was sound in his judgment, and turned not aside to any errors upon the right hand or the left. His Doctrine speak his faith in Christ, and both that and his life express his love to Morality, and Piety. I will

tell

tell you one passage which came from him about three or four daies before his death. Asking him how it was within, He answered me, *very well*, adding withal; *Blessed be God for an imputed Righteousness, and blessed be God for an inherent Righteousness; Dear Brother, I must tell you, if I had not an inherent Righteousness, I could take no comfort from an imputed Righteousness.*

He was of an unblameable Conversation. I never heard of one dead fie in his Box of Ointment. Did I say; he was of an unblameable Conversation? it was too little a word, too short by much; He was of an exemplary Conversation; He reduced precepts into practice, and was not only in his Doctrine, but in his way too a shining light.

He was a sweet Companion. Ah! my dear Brother, how pleasant, how very pleasant wast thou unto me! Grace was poured into his lips, and they dropt as an hony-comb. I was beholding to him for frequent visits. And though sometimes my own occasions were very pressing and urgent, yet was his company never burdensom, for he still detained me from business with delights and sweetnesses. And if at any time I was not a gainer by his company, it was mine own fault. He was a warm Christian, and carried up and down with him a heavenly fire, a Divine heat both in his heart and his discourses.

Some opposition he met with in his work, and discouragements, yet he was not discouraged, but held on his way, and grew stronger and stronger [*Sub ponderè crevit*] storms made him root the faster, and flourish the more. He did not count liberty nor life dear to him, so that he *might finish his course with joy, and the ministry, which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.*

And his blessed Master crowned his labours with admirable success, he did not draw up his net empty, nor had he cause to complain of labouring in vain, & spending his strength for nought & in vain. He did see of the travail of his soul in the conversion of many, and will be able to say at last, *Lord, here am I, and the Children which thou hast given me.*

But alas! alas! this bright and orient Star must fall, he must fall, not by the tail of the Dragon, but by the hand of death, did I say, he fell? no, no, he rose higher, and is now in the highest, with the highest. This Star is removed into another Orb! His Mantle of flesh he dropt and left behind, but his Spirit mounted, and returned to God that gave it. And [*Si verbis audacia detur*] give me leave to say, a great man is fall'n in London. His work was done, and his dear Master would not permit his stay after it; but took him home, and gave him his Crown. Hear a little my Brethren, of those precious sayings which flowed from him abundantly, that Night before a full surrender was made. What he spake was taken by the Pen of a ready Writer.

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Out of that large Garden I have pickt some few flowers, which I thus make up and present unto you.

He had his light of comfort in that day of trouble, though not a bright Sun-shine, yet under the thickest Cloud he could see grace in his Heart, and read his Evidence. These words assure us of that; *Dear Jesus, dost not thou know that I love thee, though not with that activity, which others do, yet with truth of love. Oh! thou knowest that I love thee, and wilt not thou love me, and manifest thy self to me? Lord thou knowest, the bent of my heart was toward thy self; thou knowest, I laid up my treasure with thee, and made choice of Heaven for mine Inheritance, thou wilt not forget it now.*

He had his experiences ready to produce, as Cordials to himself, and Arguments with his God, will you hear them? *Oh dear Jesus, a glimpse of the light of thy Countenance is worth an age of pains and prayers. I have had formerly, not only tastes, but large draughts sometimes. Ah my dear Father, thou hast given me sweet encouragement in waiting upon thee, and of late thou hast not wholly turned thy back. Oh my dear Jesus, didst thou not manifest thy self to me at the Sacrament, when I was so very weak? didst thou not thou give me some tastes that thou art gracious, and that thou didst love me in particular, and that thou wouldst never leave nor forsake me, nor suffer me to depart from thee, is this so long a time ago?*

He had high thoughts of God when he was at the lowest, he justified him, and that in this very Language; *O my Lord, I will not complain of thee, though I must complain to thee. I complain of my self, but not of thee. I have deserved thou shouldst let me die in a Cloud, and though I do, I doubt not but I shall be happy.*

He could with a composed Spirit take his leave, and shake hands with all. His expressions were these; *Farewell the world, the pleasures, profits and honours of the world: farewell sin, I shall ever be with the Lord. Farewell my dear Wife, farewell my dear Children, farewell my Servants, and farewell you my Spiritual Children; whom he was at leisure thus to advise, be careful in your choice of a Pastor, choose one, who in his Doctrine, life and manners may adorn the Gospel; I shall be glad to meet you all in Heaven. This spake a calm within, a sedate frame of Spirit.*

He could welcome death, observe how his words were dipt in oyl, when its hands were to be imbrewed in his blood. *Oh noble Death, welcome, welcome. Would you know how this came to pass? these words tell you. Death hath wounded my head, death hath wounded my breast (which was full of pimples) but he hath not wounded my conscience, blessed be God. He could with importunity call for Death. Hasten, hasten, oh hasten Death, where is thy bow, where thine arrows, come, come, come, I am yet in the body, I am yet on earth, but it is Heaven, Heaven, Heaven, I would fain be at. I seek death,*

death, but I will find it; How long O Lord holy and true. He would scarce be reconciled to the means of rebuking his disease, and prolonging his days. It was conscience of duty that put him upon use of them. That learned and excellent Physician (who applied to him in his sickness, and whose heart was set upon his recovery (though he much question'd it) told me he said to him, why do you come to keep me out of Heaven? He could play with Death thus? Pray thee, take possession of my Body, see what thou wilt get by it, fatten thy Grave with thy Sacrifices:

He had high and admiring thoughts of Jesus Christ, read them thus, Ob dear Jesus, what art thou? Oh! that glorious Spirit, that laid the foundations of the Earth, and stretched out the Heavens like a Curtain. Oh what an excellent person art thou! oh what an excellent person art thou! thou art all lovely, in every part, from the Crown of the head, to the Sole of the foot, thou art all lowe, all excellent, thy bounty is divine, thy love is divine, thy beauty is divine.

He was not satisfied with what he had of Christ. Observe how desires flamm'd. Dear Jesus, dear sweet Jesus, come unto me, and manifest thy self unto me, that others may see and know that thou lovest me. Now if ever; now, now, now, if ever, now if ever; O dear Jesus. I am going out of the body to be with thee, to deal only with Spirits. Oh that I might have the light of thy countenance, the sense of thy love, oh come unto me. I see but a little of thy beauty and excellency; oh that I might see more, and taste more, and enjoy more, that I may have more than ever I had, and taste more than ever I did.

And he longed to be with Jesus, was in a kind of holy impatience, sick of love and desires to delight himself in clear vision and full fruition of him. Witness these groans, Dear Jesus, come and take me away, I have no business here, my work is done, my glass is run, my strength is gone, and when my work is done, why shall I stay behind, Oh come, come, be as a Roe upon the Mountains of spices. How long shall I wait? and cry? how long shall I be absent from thee? And again, O come and take me to thy self, and give me possession of that happiness, which is above the vision of thy self, perfect likeness to thy self, full fruition of thy self, without any interruption or conclusion. And yet again, O come dear Lord Jesus, how long before thou send thy Chariots, O come thou down to me, and take me up to thee. Having lain some time silent and still, a Friend desired him to give him his hand, if the clouds were scattered, whereupon he reached out his hand, and said (as those present understood him.) I am upheld in the Arms of a Mediator. Thus died this precious Saint, this eminent Minister; thus he lived, and thus he died. Let him never be forgotten, he shall not, he cannot be forgotten. And let us who survive be followers of him, and others, who serv'd and walked with Christ on earth, and now sit and reign with Christ in glory.

F I N I S.

